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Letter dated 30 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour of writing to you to request your kind assistance in circulating as a document of the Security Council the present letter and the annexed statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia regarding the recent incident that occurred in Ganmukhuri on 30 October 2007.

(*Signed*) Irakli **Alasania**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

07-57485 (E) 011107

Annex to the letter dated 30 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

30 October 2007

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia

On 30 October 2007, scores of Russian peacekeepers in three armoured personnel carriers surrounded a youth peace camp in Georgia's Zugdidi district and severely beat five Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs personnel who were guarding the camp. The guards, who were then handcuffed to a Russian personnel carrier, were released only after the intervention of Georgian police.

The unprovoked attack, which was immediately condemned by President Saakashvill in a visit to the attack site, was recorded on video by the Russian peacekeepers. The National Security Council of Georgia met later in the day and declared the former head of the Russian peacekeeping force in Abkhazia, General Sergei Chaban, an undesirable person.

The unauthorized patrol by the Russians took place at approximately 12.15 p.m. local time in the village of Ganmukhuri. The armoured personnel carriers entered the area where the youth peace camp is located and surrounded the five Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs personnel who were guarding the camp. As seen in the Russian video, the peacekeepers then violently beat the guards.

Ministry of Internal Affairs units immediately responded. They blocked the Russian peacekeepers, who violently resisted. The tense confrontation subsided only with the arrival of President Saakashvill, who demanded the withdrawal of the Russian military personnel from the area.

The Russian peacekeepers acted in direct violation of the CIS mandate. The incident was the latest in a series of destabilizing acts by the Russian side aimed at undermining the peace process in Abkhazia, Georgia. It follows two months after the 6 August 2007 Tsitelubani missile attack, during which a Russian fighter jet fired an anti-radar missile on Georgian territory. Today's attack took place against a backdrop of recent progress in the conflict resolution process, with a direct dialogue likely to begin in the coming weeks.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia condemns these arbitrary acts of adventurism by the Russian CIS peacekeepers in the strongest terms. It urges the Russian side to immediately cease reckless acts that raise tensions in the region and could lead to unintended consequences.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia has officially requested that the CIS Executive Committee and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation recall General Chaban, effective immediately. General Chaban is unlawfully within the territory of Georgia, as his mandate expired in February 2006 and has not been extended since then by the CIS Council of Ministers for Foreign Affairs. It should be noted that the Georgian side has repeatedly requested CIS and the Russian Federation to recall General Chaban from the territory of Georgia.